

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 SOE-02
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-10 IO-14 L-03
NSF-02 NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-05 USIA-15 SS-15 SP-02
DOE-11 INT-05 AGRE-00 /129 W
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R 181544Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9508

UNCLAS LA PAZ 1447

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: SENV, BL
SUBJ: DATA FOR THE YEAR 2000 STUDY

REF: (A) STATE 2024, (B) STATE 29923

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED A RESPONSE FROM THE BOLIVIAN FORESTAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER TO OUR REQUEST FOR DATA FOR THE YEAR 2000 STUDY. MUCH OF THE INFORMATION IS NOT READILY AVAILABLE AND SOME OF THE INFORMATION WHICH WE DID RECEIVE COULD NOT BE QUANTIFIED AT THE PRESENT TIME.

2. THE FOLLOWING DATA REFERS TO THE QUESTIONS CONTAINED IN REFTEL A.

A. FORESTRY
DEFORESTATION HAS INCREASED IN THE LAST FEW YEARS AND IS ESTIMATED TO TOTAL 250,000 TO 300,000 HECTARES IN 1978.
APPROXIMATELY 90 PERCENT OF THE GROUND COVER IS NEEDLESSLY DESTROYED; VERY LITTLE TIMBER IS CUT FOR LATER USES.
OVERGRAZING AND SLASH AND BURN AGRICULTURE HAVE CHANGED RIVER FLOWS AND HAVE ALSO STRIPPED OFF TOP SOILS EXPOSING THE UNDERLYING CLAY OF SANDY SOILS.

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REFORESTATION PLANS ARE LIMITED. FORESTRY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE SOME, ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT UNORGANIZED PLANS FOR THE FUTURE. VARIOUS GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PREPARED PROGRAMS AND STUDIES CONCERNING FORESTRY PRACTICES. BUDGET LIMITATIONS AND LACK OF TRAINED PERSONNEL HAVE HAMPERED THESE EFFORTS.

B. SOILS

PROBLEMS OF EROSION, SALINIZATION, DESERTIFICATION, AND
LATERIZATION ARE INCREASING AND IS CAUSED BY THE
FOLLOWING: IMPROPER USE OF THE LAND, OVERGRAZING,
COLONIZATION, AND DESTRUCTION OF GROUND COVER EITHER BY
SLASH AND BURN METHODS, OR BY USING MACHINERY WHICH NOT
ONLY DESTROYS THE JUNGLE, BUT ALSO THE PHYSICAL
COMPOSITION OF THE SOIL.

ON THE ALTIPLANO GRAZING ANIMALS REMOVE VIRTUALLY ALL PLANT
LIFE. MOST GRAZING, HOWEVER, OCCURS ON THE FALLOW FIELDS
WHICH ARE MAINTAINED AS GRAZING AREAS BY THE SMALL
COMMUNITIES WHICH CONTROL AND AREAS.

3. ESTIMATES AS TO THE EXTENT AND RATE OF EROSION ARE
DIFFICULT TO MAKE. THE SOIL COMPOSITION OF THE ROCK FORMATIONS
AND THE STEEP TERRAIN LEAD TO SUBSTANTIAL RATES OF NATURAL
EROSION. HUMAN ACTIVITY ALSO HAS AN IMPORTANT IMPACT BUT NO
DATA EXISTS ABOUT ITS RELATIVE MAGNITUDE.

BOEKER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Remarks:
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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